



The Angel Appearing to the Shepherds
Thomas Cole (1801–1848)

THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS
together with
THE HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II
on
CHRISTMAS EVE
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

24 December 2023 at 3:00pm
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church & School

CONCERNING THE LITURGY

The beauty of a family Christmas service is that it can incorporate playful elements that help bring the story of Christmas to life. During this service we hope to capture some of that playfulness by offering a narrative service of Holy Eucharist in which we will be able to enter more fully into the liveliness of this night that changed the world.

VOLUNTARIES

Noël nouvelet

French carol, arr. Cater

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Polish carol, arr.. Swanson

Still, still, still/In the Bleak Midwinter

German carol/Gustav Holst, arr. Slavens


Stephanie Gustafson, harp

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION


In Procession, a Hymn

Adeste Fidelis


All stand and sing.



1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;




come ye, O come ye to Beth le - hem.
sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven - a - bove;
Je - sus, to thee be of glo - ry given;



Come and be - hold him born, the King of an - gels,
glo - ry to God glo - ry in the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -



dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

Words: John Frances Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880) and others

Music: *Adeste fideles*, present from of melody att. John Frances Wade (1711-1786); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

THE WORD OF GOD

Gathering Together

Priest Glory to God in the Highest.

People **Glory to God in the Highest and peace to God's people on Earth.**

Priest The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Priest Let us pray.

God of Glory, you loved your people and sent your prophets to lead and teach, promising a messiah, a king who would bring justice and peace to the whole world. Day after day and night after night, year after year your people, who were as many as the stars in the sky, waited patiently and prayed that the savior would come soon. Be with us now as we gather as witnesses to those prayers and the miracle of Christmas, the birth of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit are one God, in Glory Everlasting. **Amen.**

The Story of Christmas

Children are invited to come down closer in front of the chancel steps.

This is the story of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Mary.

For many years God's people thought about the words of Isaiah and the other prophets: "God wants you to live in peace and will give you the perfect king to rule over you. This king will come from King David's family and he will have great wisdom and knowledge." God's angels watched over the people as they waited.

Time passed and God decided it was time to send his son to the people. Mary was a woman who loved God, and she was soon to be married to a good man named Joseph. One night, an angel came to Mary.

Mary didn't know what to think. What could God's angel want with her?

But the angel said "Mary, do not be afraid! God loves you and is pleased with you. God has something for you to do."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary said. "I will trust in God."

As Joseph slept, he was sent a message from God in a dream. He was chosen by God to love and care for Mary and the baby.

As the time came closer to the birth of Mary's baby, the ruler from Rome, Caesar Augustus, made a decree. "You must travel to your hometowns," Caesar Augustus said. "Everyone must be counted so that I will know how many people there are."

Mary and Joseph prepared to travel to Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem. On a clear, cold night,

with stars shining overhead, Mary and Joseph were very tired when they finally reached Bethlehem. They needed to find a place to sleep, but all the rooms in the town were already full of other people. There was no room for Mary and Joseph anywhere.

“I’m sorry,” the last innkeeper said. “I have no room in my inn. But you can stay in my stable if you like. It is warm and dry there.”

And while Mary and Joseph were there in the stable, Mary’s baby was born.

She wrapped the baby in soft cloths and laid him in a manger filled with fresh, clean hay. Joseph smiled and said, “His name is Jesus.”

That same night there were shepherds watching over their flocks on the hillside. The shepherds could see stars twinkling in the sky over Bethlehem, but there was one star that was the brightest they had ever seen.

And then suddenly there was a great light, and the angels of the Lord appeared to them and said, “Don’t be afraid! We bring you good news of great joy! Tonight, in the little town of Bethlehem, a baby was born. This baby is God’s own son. He is sleeping in a manger.” And, the shepherds heard the angels singing, “Glory to God in the highest and peace to God’s people on earth.”

As the angels’ voices faded away, the bright star seemed to point the way. So, the shepherds hurried to the stable where Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus were. After they saw the baby Jesus in the manger, the shepherds knew they had seen the promised Messiah, and they left the Holy family rejoicing.

Mary treasured all that had happened and pondered these events in her heart. Others would also see the star and hear the angels’ voices, and they too would celebrate the birth of Immanuel – God with us.

Glory to God in the highest.

Glory to God in the highest and peace to God’s people on earth.

In Reflection, a Hymn

Gloria

All stand and sing. Children return to their seats.

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;
4 See him in a man - ger laid whom the an - gels praise a - bove;

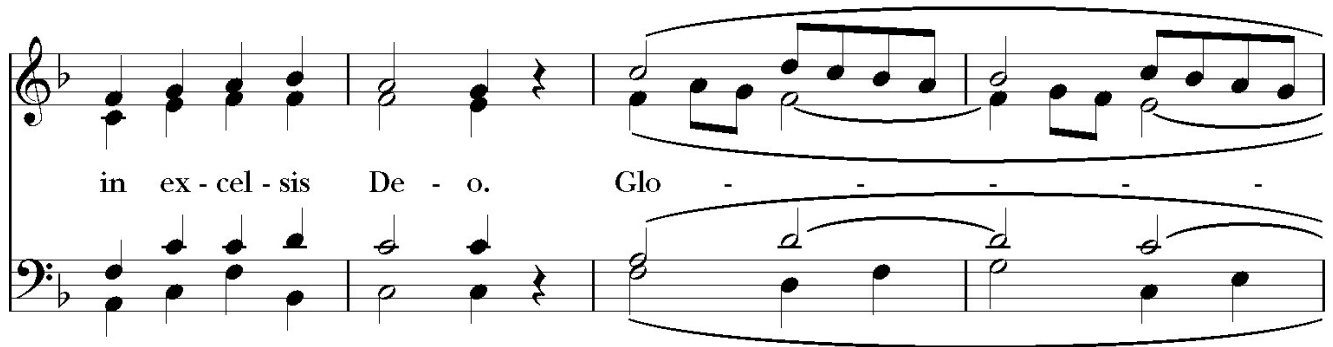


and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.
 Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -

Responding to the Story of Christmas

The priest says these or similar words

Just as the angels proclaimed the good news of Jesus' birth, we too proclaim the good news that guides us in all we do.

The priest and people together say

We believe in God, who made everything: the sun, the moon, stars in the sky; the earth, the seas, and the heavens above; all the creatures that swim and fly and crawl and run; and every human who loves and cries and laughs and sings.

We believe in Jesus, God's son, who loves us, who was born to Mary in a stable amidst the animals and was worshipped on that night by the angels and the shepherds.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is always with us helping us to love each other; a Spirit more powerful than any doubt or fear or darkness. **Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

The leader says

The shepherds heard the good news of Jesus' birth and rushed to see the baby who had come to save the world bringing their hopes and dreams and prayers. Rejoicing with Mary, the shepherds, and the entire world, let us also bring to Jesus our own hopes and dreams and prayers.

Jesus, you are the Son of God, and the Son of Mary,
We pray for our families and all those we love,
That this Christmas would find them filled with your joy.

Jesus, at your birth you had no crib for a bed,
We pray for the homeless, for migrants, and for refugees
That you would embrace them with your love.

Jesus, the sheep and donkeys rejoiced at your birth,
We pray for our home, your earth
That you would pour out your abundance on it.

Jesus, you came into the world to heal the sick and free the captive,
We pray for all those who suffer and are oppressed
That you would bring them into the freedom of your kingdom.

Jesus, you were born to give us life,
We pray for all those who have died,
That they would know the joy of your glory.

Jesus, you are with us, and we pray for our own needs and those of others.
The people add their own prayers, silently and aloud.

The Priest adds a concluding collect.

Exchange the Peace

The priest says

The angels sang of God's peace, peace which Jesus gives freely and to all who come to him. So on this most holy night, may the peace of the Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Priest Let us share with one another the sign of peace.

The people and clergy share the peace with one another.

The priest says the following offertory sentence,

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. For everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom, and you are exalted as head over all. *1 Chronicles 29:11*

Giving to St. Andrew's

To make a contribution to the ministry of St. Andrew's, please drop your offering in the plate or scan this QR code to give securely online.



At the Offertory, an Anthem

On Christmas Night

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
to hear the news the angels bring;
On Christmas night all Christians sing,
to hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
Then why should we on earth be sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
When from our sin He set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before Your grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
When sin departs before Your grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night;
All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and forevermore. Amen."

Words: Bishop Luke Wadding, 1684

Music: *Sussex Carol*, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

At the Presentation, a Hymn

Greensleeves

All stand and sing as the gifts are brought to the altar

Verses

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest On
1. Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
1. an - thems sweet, While shep - herds watch are keep - ing?

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, Whom shep - herds
guard and an - gels sing; Haste, haste to
bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Celebrant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant continues

Holy God, we gather together this day to offer you thanks and praise. You created all that is and gave us the very breath of life. From the beginning, you have called us into friendship with you, inviting us to know you and love you with all that we have and all that we are. Therefore we join our voices with the angels and archangels praising you and saying:

The Celebrant and people together

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Father you created us to know you, yet we walked away from you and fell into sin, death, and evil. But you did not abandon us. Through the calling of Israel to be your people, through the giving of your law, through your word spoken through prophets you reminded us again and again of your great love for us. In the fullness of time to deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor on Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made. In the fullness of time bring us, with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Joseph and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

The Celebrant and people together say,

AMEN.

The Celebrant continues,

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray

The Celebrant and people together

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy Name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 for ever and ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept. Then the Celebrant continues

Glory to God in the highest!
 People And peace to his people on earth!

All are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church. At the altar rail, you may elect to dip (intinct) your wafer in the wine or drink from the chalice as it passes you. If you desire to receive a blessing instead of communion, please cross your arms over your chest. If you would prefer to receive a gluten-free wafer, please clasp your hands together, and one of the clergy will offer a gluten free wafer to you. If you require communion be brought to you, please let the usher know.

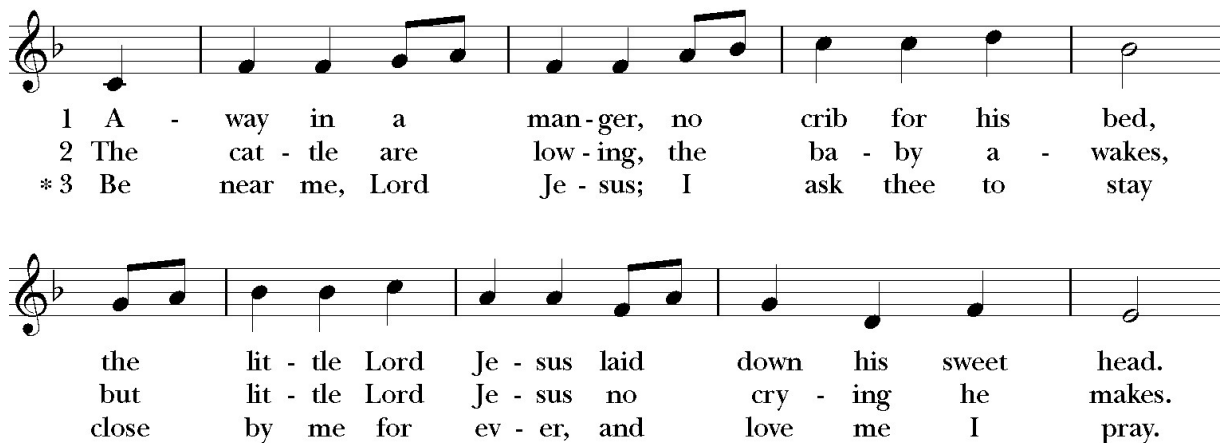
At the Distribution, a Reflection

Es ist ein Ros

German carol, arr. Daniel Burton


At the Distribution, a Hymn

Cradle Song




1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat-tle are low-ing, the ba-by a-wakes,
 *3 Be near me, Lord Je-sus; I ask thee to stay

the lit-tle Lord Je-sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit-tle Lord Je-sus no cry-ing he makes.
 close by me for ev-er, and love me I pray.



The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

Words: Traditional carol Music: *Cradle Song*, melody William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921); harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) Copyright © by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Forest Green



1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry; and gath - ered all a - bove,
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man - hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
 O morn - ing stars, to geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the Kings, and peace to men on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

Music: *Forest Green*, English melody; adapt. and harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams

The Post-Communion Prayer

All stand.

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant and people together,

Holy God,

you came among us as a child in a manger,

we thank you for coming among us still

in bread and wine. Send us out into the world

to proclaim the good news of great

joy that a savior has been born for us, your

Son Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit

are one God for ever and ever. Amen.

In Procession, a Hymn

Mendelssohn



1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;
3. Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Joy - ful all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail the in car - nate De - i - ty.
Risen with heal - ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,



with the an gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness! hail, the heaven - born Prince of Peace!



Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Music: *Mendelssohn*, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

The Dismissal

Priest Let us go forth to love and serve the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY

Paeon on Divinum Mysterium

John Cook

Support for today's guest musicians is provided by David & Mary Rennie
and in thanksgiving for the birth of Jesus Christ
and in memory of Elizabeth Yeung Brown, sister of Mary.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

GIVEN IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Elaine "Sissy" Massey by Cathey Harrison
The Rev. Haskin V Little and the Rev. John E. Binford by John Lanier
Harry Baxter, Jackie Baxter, Dick Baxter, and Ray Wallace by Kipp Wallace Baxter
Our departed loved ones by Paul and Laurie Hardwick
Xian Biao Zhang by the Rev. Clint Brown and Cavan Zhang
Sara Lewis by Pam Lewis
Victoria Conti by Carrie Conti
Jean Lykes Grace and R. Randall Grace, Jr. by the Rev. Jimmy and Marla Grace
Mary Frances and Bill Jarrett, Martha and Forrest Liger by Alli Jarrett and Karin Farquhar
Lynnae Thompson by Craig Thompson
Betty and Ernest F. Simpson, and Gertie Williams by Nancy and Shannon Simpson

GIVEN IN THANKSGIVING FOR

Family and Friends by Cathey Harrison
The St. Andrew's Staff by the Rev. Clint Brown and Cavan Zhang
Our many blessings by Paul and Laurie Hardwick
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church by the Rev. Jimmy and Marla Grace
Diane and Win Farquhar, Ann Weeks, Nancy and Tony Jarrett by Alli Jarrett and Karin Farquhar
J.D. and Michael Alexander by John and Julie Alexander
Mr. John Kirk and the Music Ministry of St. Andrew's in the Heights
by Stacy and Kay Lynn Jenkins
The grandchildren of Lynnae Thompson, Elle Williams, Parker and Preston Simmons
by Craig Thompson
Gary Burton by Diana Burton
St. Andrew's by Stephanie Wells

GIVEN IN HONOR OF

Dr. Michael J. King by Ken and Patti Anderle



ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL

1819 Heights Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77008
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The Reverend Clint Brown, *Associate Rector for Youth & Adult Formation*
The Reverend Jeff Bohanski, *Assistant Rector*
The Reverend Canon Joann Saylor, *Assisting Priest*
The Reverend Francene Young, *Assisting Priest*
The Reverend Bob Merrill, *Assisting Priest*
Carrie Conti, *Office Manager*
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